

# Notable Quotables

September 18, 2000 (Vol. Thirteen; No. 19)

A bi-weekly compilation of the latest outrageous, sometimes humorous, quotes in the liberal media.



Bringing Political Balance  
to the Media

## From Frat Boy to Rat Boy

"By their very nature campaign ads are biased efforts to sell someone a point of view, but one Republican television ad attacking Al Gore now seems to have struck a new low. It carries hints of a hidden message and some would say they smell a rat."

— Bryant Gumbel on CBS's *The Early Show* about an ad with the letters "RATS" for 1/30th of a second, Sept. 12.

"Calling it 'sublibimal' instead of subliminal. Is that dyslexia?"

— First question from Lester Holt, substitute anchor of MSNBC's *The News with Brian Williams* on September 12, to left-wing writer Gail Sheehy, author of a *Vanity Fair* piece charging George W. Bush has dyslexia.

"On one level this is just juvenile name calling, it's a fraternity prank. But it does raise some problems for Bush. The ad looks like an effort to deceive the voters. The Republican Party let it run even after they knew about it. Bush has got to make it clear that as President he will not tolerate any efforts to deceive or manipulate the voters."

— CNN political analyst Bill Schneider, September 12 *The World Today*.

"The ad's producer, well known as a practitioner of the black art of negative advertising, admitted he placed the word 'rats' there, but not to run down Gore."

— Reporter John Roberts on Alex Castellanos, September 12 *CBS Evening News*.

"They said it [the 1988 Willie Horton ad] was produced independently of the Bush campaign, but connections to Bush's campaign genius, the late Lee Atwater, were later discovered. And in fact, Atwater founded the company where Alex Castellanos is now creative director, so the tradition lives on."

— NBC reporter Andrea Mitchell on MSNBC's *The Mitchell Report*, September 12.

## Dick Cheney, Bathroom Bigot

"This week we learned that citizen Dick Cheney didn't vote in 14 of the last 16 state elections in Texas. His excuse? He was, quote, 'focused on global concerns.' Was part of his concern Halliburton's policy abroad of segregating bathrooms for Americans only? Halliburton's excuse was they were providing for, quote, 'cultural needs.' Didn't they say something like that in Mississippi in defense of whites-only toilets?"

— *Time* columnist Margaret Carlson's "Outrage of the Week" on CNN's *Capital Gang*, September 9.

## I'd Love Help Denigrating Bush

"Personally, I like personal criticism. We've had that in our politics for more than 200 years. I'd like to see the Democrats attack Bush as a lightweight in hock to polluters who expects the Oval Office as a graduation gift and wouldn't know enough as President to settle the inevitable differences among his advisers."

— *Newsweek's* Jonathan Alter, September 11.

## CNN "Corrects" Non-Error

**Ad announcer:** "Al Gore, claiming credit for things he didn't even do."

**Gore in interview clip from the ad:** "I took the initiative in creating the Internet."

**Reporter Brooks Jackson:** "Wait, play that again."

**Gore clip again:** "I took the initiative in creating the Internet."

**Jackson:** "Gore never said he invented the Internet, as he's widely misquoted, and, in fact, he did push government support for computer networking as far back as 1986..."

— *CNN's Inside Politics*, August 31.

## Asinine Adam Clymer Outrage

"Governor Bush may have stepped on his message of restoring honor and dignity to the White House today when a microphone caught him making an undignified remark about a newspaper reporter."

— *NBC Nightly News* anchor John Siegenthaler, Sept. 4.

"George Bush may have taken yet another step backwards by sticking his foot in his mouth with a vulgar comment."

— Bryant Gumbel on CBS's *The Early Show*, Sept. 5.

"On one bit of campaign meanness and nastiness in particular, George Bush now says he's sorry his gutter language and personal attack was picked up by a microphone at a campaign stop yesterday, but he refuses to apologize for the substance of his comment. Bush's remark was about Adam Clymer, a *New York Times* reporter whose coverage he doesn't like."

— Dan Rather on the *CBS Evening News*, September 5.

"If I could cover this story, which obviously I can't, I think probably using bad language while promising to restore dignity to the White House is a contradiction that he — you know, that will hurt him in a tiny, modest way."

— *New York Times* reporter Adam Clymer on CNN's *Reliable Sources*, September 9.

## George Washington Crossed Line

**CBS Face the Nation host Gloria Borger:** "Joe Lieberman also said that quote, 'morality cannot be maintained without religion.' He later struggled to explain that statement. But did that cross the line a little bit?"

**Bill Bennett:** "Well, that was actually George Washington who said that and Joe Lieberman was piggy-backing on George Washington..."

— **September 3 exchange.**

## Firestone Failures? Blame Reagan

"When Firestone struggled through an earlier recall in 1978, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, or NHTSA, was at the height of its power. It drafted tough new tire regulations, but the rules were never enacted. Ronald Reagan swept to power promising to help struggling U.S. auto companies by reducing regulations. NHTSA's budget was slashed, and now two decades later the regulator is left with little real power and few resources. Since 1980, NHTSA's staff has been cut by 30 percent, and its budget by even more. At the same time, the number of cars in America has jumped 38 percent."

— **Reporter Bob Orr, September 7 CBS Evening News.**

"The agency [NHTSA] fined Firestone \$800,000 [in the late 1970s], the most allowed under the law. It looked like it meant business. Then came the Reagan administration. They had a very different philosophy. The reforms that grew from the 1978 recall were scrapped, the agency budget was cut 49 percent. The staff of the defects office has remained the same over the last 20 years."

— **ABC's John Martin, September 6 World News Tonight.**

"We went through that whole period, get government off our backs. Remember the Competitive Council? Let the corporations voluntarily regulate themselves and come up with safety standards, so that the Carter administration could come up with new standards for tires, the Reagan administration came in and cut them out, abolished them and cut the budget of that very agency, that the Republicans are now criticizing, by 50 percent. And it's never come back. It's never come back."

— **Time's Margaret Carlson on CNN's Capital Gang, September 9.**

"In the 1980s, the Reagan administration poleaxed NHTSA and other regulatory agencies as costly encumbrances to business. NHTSA's current budget is \$392 million, a third less in real terms than it was in 1980.

— **Time reporter Adam Zagorin, September 18.**

## Let's Ban Awful SUVs

"The larger point here is how awful SUVs are. It amazes me that no one contemplates getting rid of them, in a serious way, getting rid of the things. They're gas guzzlers in a big way that are going to hurt us — our long-term dependence on foreign energy. They're very unsafe. They roll over. If you're in a small car, they'll crunch you. Everything about them is bad, yet Americans gleefully buy them and nobody talks about banning them."

— **Newsweek Assistant Managing Editor Evan Thomas on Inside Washington, September 9.**

## One-Sided Take on Taxes

"President Clinton's veto of legislation that would have repealed the inheritance tax will stand. House Republicans failed today to get the two-thirds majority vote to override the veto. President Clinton called the measure a tax giveaway that would overwhelmingly mostly benefit the rich."

— **Dan Rather, September 7 CBS Evening News.**

## No Red Threat, Just a Green One

"Despite the danger that climate change poses, the resources currently devoted to studying this problem — and combating it — are inconsequential compared with the trillions spent during the cold war. Twenty years from now, we may wonder how we could have miscalculated which threat represented the greater peril."

— **Time contributor Eugene Linden, September 4.**

## Geraldo Rivera for Mayor

"It's a dream I've had, a real dream I've had, another dream. This is something since I was a child really. You know being from a Puerto Rican-Jewish background growing up, being born in New York City. You know this is a city that has suffered terrible ethnic and racial divisions over the last eight, twelve years. And I think that the Mayor, he may be a good man, but his policies have exacerbated a feeling where minority mothers worry now about their children being hurt by the cops more than the crooks."

— **Geraldo Rivera discussing his potential candidacy for Mayor of New York City, August 31 Today.**

## Oprah: I Wanted Tongue Too

"No kiss? I was hoping for something!"

— **Oprah Winfrey after Al Gore walked onto her set and just gave her a peck on the cheek, September 11 Oprah.**

"Notice the hug, it's a full body pull me in, pull me in, whoa baby!"

— **Oprah replaying "The Kiss" of the Gores, same show.**

## Notable Quotables

**PUBLISHER:** L. Brent Bozell

**EDITORS:** Brent H. Baker, Tim Graham

**MEDIA ANALYSTS:** Jessica Anderson, Brian Boyd, Geoffrey Dickens, Ted King, Paul Smith, Brad Wilmouth

**RESEARCH ASSOCIATE:** Kristina Sewell

**COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR:** Liz Swasey

**INTERNS:** Jenny Jackson, Ken Shepherd

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